Statement

District-wise list of Telephone Exchanges to be set up in West Bengal

Sl. No.	Name of District	No. of telephone exchanges to be set up
1.	Murshidabad	02
2.	Cooch Behar	06
3.	Nadia	04
4.	Malda	01
5.	Midnapore	04
6.	Howrah	04
7.	Hooghly	01
8.	24 Parganas (North)	02
9.	24 Parganas (South)	02
	TOTAL :	26

Constitution of Telephone Advisory Committees at Circle Level

†214. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry has been in receipt of suggestions from the Representatives (M.Ps.) in regard to constituting Telephone Advisory Committees at circle level throughout the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Ministry in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not*arise in view of (a) above.

Implementation of Revised Tariff

215. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) the loss of revenue suffered by MTNL during April to December, 1999 for not implementing the revised tariff;

(b) the reasons for this lapse and the amount remaining unrealized so far;

(c) the investment made in December, 1999 on procurement of Internet pay phones; and

(d) the reasons for not utilizing them and the loss caused as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) and (b) Only the revised tariff in respect of leased circuit which was revised from 01 -04-1999 could not be implemented. While the revision was downward in respect of high-speed circuit, it was upward in respect of low speed circuit for distances upto 18 km. Prior to 01-04-1999 the rent of the low speed circuit was Rs.1500/- per km. per annum and it was revised to Rs. 24558/- per annum for a minimum distance of upto 5.km.

Considering the request from MTNL, DOT issued a corrigendum No. 3 on 24-02-2000 further revising the tariff w.e.f. 01-01-2000. Accordingly, bills were issued *w.e.f.* 01-01-2000.The difference between the amount of revenue due as per revised tariff and that billed at pre-revised tariff relating to the period from April, 1999 to December, 1999 is 18.71 crore. The unrealized amount so far is Rs. 43.34 lakhs on pro-rata basis.

(c) MTNL placed a purchase order as a pilot project in March, 1999 for supply of 50 Internet Pay Phones worth Rs. 3.43 crores. However, the delivery was made in November, 1999.

(d) This technology was inducted for the first time by MTNL and involved acquirer Bank to collect the payment from the card holders and paying the same to MTNL. It was essential that the testing is done in all respect including Real Time Testing on the network so that there is no loss of revenue to MTNL.The testing was carried out from November, 1999 to February, 2001. The Internet Pay Phones were progressively made operational with effect from February, 2001. From February, 2001 to March, 2003, MTNL has incurred a loss of about Rs.8,60,022/- (approximately) (Rupees Eight Lakhs Sixty Thousand and Twenty

Two only) mainly due to changes in internet and other Telecom tarrifs in the period which made the internet kiosk commercially unviable.

Installation of new telephone exchanges

216. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that installation of new telephone exchanges has been discontinued throughout the country;

(b) whether uncovered rural and urban areas are proposed to be covered with the help of WLL;

(c) if the replies to parts (a) and (b) above are in affirmative, whether the coverage of uncovered areas is impossible on accounts of hill topography in hilly areas of the country; and

(d) whether in view of this difficulty in hilly States, Government would consider installation of telephone exchanges in each area?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN):

Reply in respect of BSNL (Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited)

(a) No, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. The coverage of the hilly areas of the country is possible and the policies being followed for the installation of an exchange is as given below:

(i) The planning of rural aras should first be with WLL solution.

(ii) If WLL solution is not workable due to technical reasons, a new exchange should be planned with minimum registration of 75 within the local area of exchanges.

(iii) New exchange should be commissioned on optical fiber media. However, radio/satellite media should be used wherever optical fiber media is not techno-economically feasible.

Reply in respect of MTNL (Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited)

(a) No, Sir. Exchanges are being installed in MTNL.